



# Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

April—May 2020

How are you all? I know that most of you will be in the middle of your three-month period of self-isolation and the majority of you will be shielding the person you care for.

The pandemic has brought with it very many challenges for people in all walks of life and we are having to think creatively about how we navigate them. Every week those of us able to do so go outside and applaud our NHS staff, professional carers and all the nation's keyworkers across many organisations, thanking them for the work they do and for helping to keep us safe. This is very right and proper.

However, it is only in the last few days that there has been any focus on the role played by you, the country's army of unpaid, informal carers, without whom these organisations, quite frankly, would struggle to cope. A BBC news item featured a mother who took the decision to look after her severely disabled daughter at home rather than risk her being in a care home environment and provided exhausting 24 hour care with no chance of respite. Not only was she keeping her daughter safe, but she was choosing not to make use of over stretched resources. But, as she said, what happens if she herself becomes ill; the whole pack of cards comes tumbling down. A comment by Helen Walker, Chief Executive of Carers UK warned that, when this is all over, if the Government wants to stand behind their acknowledgement that unpaid family carers are a vital link in the chain, then they need to re-think the support they offer.

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## MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

If you or the person you care for is in hospital during this emergency, whether with COVID related symptoms or for other health reasons, you will be unable to have visitors. Our local hospitals have set up a dedicated email address so that you can send a message to your loved one.

The address is: [Post4patients@swft.nhs.uk](mailto:Post4patients@swft.nhs.uk)

All emails from families need to contain the full name of the patient, the hospital and the ward.

Messages will be printed off, placed in plastic wallets and labelled for individuals and wards.

They will be distributed by chaplains and volunteers based at Stratford Hospital to all hospital sites in the Trust.

## OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Carers4Carers' monthly meetings take place on the **fourth** Friday of the month. We meet at the Kinton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kinton, CV35 OLB between 10.30 and 12 noon. In accordance with Government guidelines during the current COVID-19 emergency, we regret that our meetings have been **CANCELLED** until further notice.

Carers 4 Carers is part of the network of Omega Meeting Point Support Groups Reg. Charity No. 1120322

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

It's really important that we all keep in touch while we are unable to meet in person. This newsletter is one way of doing this. We will continue to publish monthly although the timing may be a little different from usual. As we are unable to offer guidance and advice through visiting speakers, some newsletters will have a main focus and they will be of varying length.

Many people have been quick to comment on how much the emergency has brought out the best in people. Sadly, also, the reverse is true. The focus for this newsletter is therefore SCAMS.



## SOME TYPES OF SCAMS

It is impossible to list all the scams currently circulating here but information sent to us from national and local government agencies highlight the following attempts by criminals trying to capitalise on the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Doorstep crime:

- Criminals on the doorstep offer to do shopping. They take the money and do not return
- Doorstep cleansing services offer to clean drives and doorways to kill bacteria and help prevent the spread of the virus.

### Email:

- Fraudsters try to trick people into following links which can lead to identity theft by asking for personal information, passwords, contacts and bank details. Malicious attachments offer to give information about local people affected by coronavirus.
- Fake online resources – such as false Coronavirus Maps – that deliver malware such as AZORult Trojan, an information stealing program which can infiltrate a variety of sensitive data.

### Refund scams:

- Companies offering fake holiday refunds for individuals who have been forced to cancel their trips. People seeking refunds should be wary of fake websites set up to claim holiday refunds

### Counterfeit goods:

- Fake sanitisers, face masks and Covid19 swabbing kits sold online and door-to-door. These products can often be dangerous and unsafe.

### Telephone scams:

- As more people self-isolate at home there is an increasing number of telephone scams from criminals claiming to be your bank, mortgage lender or utility company.

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## HOW TO SPOT A SCAM IN AN EMAIL - some pointers to look for:

Scammers often target people by pretending to be someone else. There are several ways in which you can check whether an email is from the person they say they are.

Look at the email address, not just the sender. You might see:

Macmillan Cancer Support <latest@macmillan-email.org.uk>  
To kcarers4carers@gmail.com



## Carers 4 Carers - Finding support through supporting each other

With the exception of independent workers (like us), most organisations and companies have their own domain name. That's the bit to the right of the @ in the email address. Therefore someone claiming to be from HMRC should not be sending from a public email account such as gmail.com.

When someone sets up an email account, they can choose what name to display. In the example above, that's Macmillan Cancer Support. They can't hide the actual email address. What to look for:

If the domain name matches the sender, as in @macmillan-email.org.uk, it is more likely to be genuine.

If it doesn't, it's likely to be a fake address: **From: PayPal <paypal@notice-access-273.com>** Here, "paypal" is part of the address but it's not the domain name so is fake.

These are easy to spot if you are accessing your email on a computer but not obvious on a tablet. On an iPad, touch the name of the sender and the full email address will appear at the side of sender name. If it doesn't, tap it again and it will pop up in a panel below.

Other tell-tale signs are: misspelt company names, a list of random letters and numbers, a poor standard of English, suspicious looking links or attachments, the message gives a sense of urgency or you are not addressed by name.

If the email suggests it's from a company you've had dealings with and wants to check your details via a link, go to the website via your web-browser and type in the address. Log in to your account that way.

How to check on a link in an email? **Don't** click on it. Hover with your mouse over the link: if it's just a random selection of numbers and letters, it's unlikely to be legitimate. Better still, if a website is referred to, it's safer to key the address into Google than click on the link.

Safest option all round—delete the email.

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### WHAT DO YOU DO NEXT?

Getting rid of a suspicious email is easy—delete it.

Getting rid of a suspicious telephone caller is easy—don't engage in conversation and put the phone down. My mother always said that she could often tell a hoax or advertising call because there was a lot of noise in the background like a call centre. Not a failsafe criteria but often works.

Getting rid of a doorstep caller is less easy. Do you have a chain on your door and a spy-hole? If so, and you don't know the caller, refuse to open the door. Call back into the house as if someone else is there, even if there isn't. Scammers love people who live alone. If you have a notice telling cold callers not to call and they do, they are breaking the law.

**Stop:** Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

**Challenge:** Could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

**Protect:** Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud\*.

This message appeared on Facebook recently →

[www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk](http://www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk) 07947 893504 [kcarers4carers@gmail.com](mailto:kcarers4carers@gmail.com)



Wellesbourne Police

2 hrs · 🌐

#### Where to go for help

- If you receive a call from someone purporting to be a police officer and asking you to withdraw or transfer money, call **Warwickshire Police on 101** – the more intelligence we receive, the more likely we are to catch those responsible.
- If you have been a victim of a telephone scam, please report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or via their website:

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

- For advice on scams, contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

**Always call 999 in an emergency.**

## Carers 4 Carers - Finding support through supporting each other

There is so much information available on scams, I could fill several more pages. Instead, here are some links I have been sent by the Warwickshire County Council and other reputable agencies:

<https://safeinwarwickshire.com/2020/04/17/beware-of-telephone-scams/> "Safe in Warwickshire" works with a number of local government and emergency organisations to provide up-to-date alerts.

[https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/article/505/beware\\_of\\_covid\\_19\\_scams](https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/article/505/beware_of_covid_19_scams) a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative

<https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/> a government backed initiative.

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/fraud-scams-covid19>

In addition to Action Fraud, you can also get advice on scams from WCC Trading Standards by phoning 01926 414040 . Although officers are working from home, the phonelines are still being covered.

### ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH HELP AND SUPPORT ?



Have you got somebody to help you with shopping and errands for things that you need?

In most communities, there are groups of volunteers that have been set up to make sure that those of you who are self-isolating and unable to do your own shopping are not left without. I know there is an excellent network both in Wellesbourne and Kineton.

The county council has produced a 100+ page

document of all the groups throughout the county and how to contact them so if you do have difficulties I can put you in touch. Alternatively, you can easily find information with a simple search facility at <https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/covid19directory>.

For those without internet access or in an emergency, WCC has set up a help line: **0800 4081447** . Help is offered with deliveries of medication, food and essentials as well as advice on financial support, mental health and wellbeing and health and social care information.

### SOMETHING TO WATCH

At the beginning of this lockdown, the BBC started broadcasting Healthcheck UK Live, devised specifically for people self-isolating at home. After a two week break it's just returned at 10.00 a.m. or watch on Catchup if you can.

Michelle Ackerley and Dr Xand van Tulleken guide us through the challenges of keeping mentally and physically healthy and are joined by Angela Rippon, herself self-isolating. It's a 45 minute mix of reports from around the country, demonstrating how communities are coming together, cooking tips, factual information about the virus and its implications, ideas for keeping mentally healthy and active and so much more.

The programme also hails the return of Mr Motivator. Remember him and his eye-smacking outfits? His fun and varied exercises are aimed at all levels of physical ability. But it's not just the fun; I felt truly inspired as

Mr M described the struggles that he has had to overcome and how we have a choice every day to be happy or sad. Choosing to be happy makes you feel so much better. The first series is still available on the BBC website.

### AFTER ALL THAT, HOW ABOUT A SMILE?

